

*Online*

*…linking the Beacon Parishes*

**Sunday 12th July 2020**

**5th Sunday after Trinity**

**Not-the-Rector**

When I last wrote some thoughts for this space a few months ago, we were all in Lent and in lockdown. There was a sense then, perhaps, of wandering in the wilderness. Where have we journeyed in these weeks and what point have we reached?

As everything around us begins to open up, we might like to think that we have reached the Promised Land. However , I suspect that , with a moment’s reflection, you may feel, as I do, that we are actually a bit like the Israelites at the start of Deuteronomy – standing beyond the Jordan looking into the Promised Land which we have not yet entered.

In terms of returning to shared worship, we still face some unknown territory. We will be taking cautious steps as we seek to discern the way forward to open our churches for services. Things cannot be as they were before lockdown. The guidelines which we have been given will very drastically reduce the numbers we can accommodate for each service. At present, this is a necessity for the protection of us all and we are not taking this responsibility lightly.

We have yet to work out exact details of what this will mean in our parishes, but difficult decisions may have to be made about the range of services we can offer in the coming weeks. However all these developments are steps forward, even if they are slower and smaller than we might wish. In time, with God’s grace, we too shall occupy our Promised Land, but when and how still lies in His hand.

*Revd. Andrew*

**Readings for the Fifth Sunday after Trinity**

***Collect:***

Almighty God,

send down upon your Church

the riches of your Spirit,

and kindle in all who minister the gospel

your countless gifts of grace;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Psalm 65:8-end**

8 Those who live at earth’s farthest bounds are awed by your signs;  
you make the gateways of the morning and the evening shout for joy.

9 You visit the earth and water it, you greatly enrich it;  
the river of God is full of water;  
you provide the people with grain, for so you have prepared it.  
10 You water its furrows abundantly, settling its ridges,  
softening it with showers, and blessing its growth.  
11 You crown the year with your bounty;   
your wagon tracks overflow with richness.  
12 The pastures of the wilderness overflow,  
the hills gird themselves with joy,  
13 The meadows clothe themselves with flocks,  
the valleys deck themselves with grain,  
they shout and sing together for joy.

**The Gospel according to Matthew 13: 1-9,18-23**

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the lake. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: ‘Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!’

‘Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.’

*This is the Gospel of the Lord.*

Jesus knows that although we have ears, we often choose not to listen. We are not just one of these seeds, but we are all of these seeds at one time or another. Growing in faith requires practice; sometimes we find ourselves in the good soil and sometimes we find difficulty and questions, but the key is to keep practising. God is always present and waiting to greet us, we must continually practice being good soil, knowing that even when we fall among the thorns God will be there to help us try again.

Which seed do you think you are today?

Have you have found the good soil?

What do you hope to grow into?

**Sunday Worship**

<https://www.gloucester.anglican.org/>

Radio 4 8.10am Sunday Worship

BBC1 1.15pm Songs of Praise

**Weekday Worship**

9.45am Daily Service - Radio 4 (Long Wave)

3.30pm Wednesday Choral Evensong - Radio 3

Uk Blessing- <https://youtu.be/PUtll3mNj5U>

https://www.facebook.com/AllSaintsBelvedere/?hc\_location=ufi

https://www.facebook.com/greenwaychurches/?hc\_location=ufi

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>

Daily Hope offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line. 24 hours a day on 0800 804 8044.

Daily, across our parishes, you may wish to join a time of prayer together at 6.30pm by lighting a candle, saying the Lord’s Prayer and praying for all those who are in need especially those affected by Covid19.

Weekly on a Thursday morning at 9.30am a number of the congregation of Sheepscombe St John’s gather at a distance via Zoom to share in their customary simple form of service.   If you would like to join them or would like a copy of the service sheet please email Karen Riding [kriding07@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kriding07@yahoo.co.uk).

**Church Buildings Open for Private Prayer in the Beacon Benefice**

**St James the Great Cranham-** open Tuesday 2-3.30pm and Saturday 10am-11.30am

**St John the Baptist Edge** – open for individual prayer from 10-11am on Wednesday mornings . Only 15 people can be accommodated safely during this session. If you wish to use the church for individual prayer please could you let us know which Wednesdays you will be attending by contacting either:

Malcolm Hollingsworth - email: Malcolm.Hollingsworth@optimumoils.com or tel: 01452 812780 or Viv Barrett - email: vebarrett@btopenworld.com or tel: 01452 814564.

**St John the Baptist Harescombe**- opening by appointment, so anyone wanting to visit for private prayer or reflection please contact Tamsin 07880 791012 or Brian 07790 886307 who will be as accommodating as possible.

**St Mary the Virgin Painswick**- open Monday and Friday 11am- noon

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**Cranham Covid-19  Community Response Team:** The initial contact for Cranham residents is: [nigelrobincooper@gmail.com](mailto:nigelrobincooper@gmail.com) Tel: 07973 340227

**St. Mary’s Pastoral Link system:** Anyone who is self-isolating or unable to get out, we can help you by getting shopping, prescriptions etc. Please contact Delyth Allen (St. Mary’s Pastoral Link Coordinator) on 813182 or 07854262517 or email [delyth\_allen@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:delyth_allen@hotmail.co.uk)

**Painswick COVID-19 Community Support:** If you need support, please contact 07956 203087 or [painswick.covid19@gmail.com](mailto:painswick.covid19@gmail.com)

Beacon People

* Our prayers are asked for all who are sick, especially **Ursula Daws, William Daws, Gina Griffiths, Angela Harris, Andrea Linsell, Rowland** and **Maggie Oxland**.
* Pray for all those people, whether they are relatives or friends, who care for the sick and disabled in their own homes and for all from our churches and villages who work in the NHS and in care homes.
* We also remember before God all who have died recently, as well as all whose anniversaries of death fall at this time.

*Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord*

*And let light perpetual shine upon them*

Notices

**Stroud Foodbank** urgently require **toiletries.** A collection point is being organised in **St. Mary’s Churchyard, Painswick on Wednesday15th July 10am-12noon.** They would be very grateful for contributions of: *Deodorant, Shaving kits, Shampoo, Conditioner, Shower gel, Washing powder, Washing up liquid.* Thank you so much for your support.

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**PSALMS news and prayer requests -** Be encouraged that PSALMS has recruited some excellent team members for next year. Give thanks also for Ben White, who has been a fantastic servant of Jesus during his year, and although he has a few weeks left we are appreciative of the gifts he has brought throughout this year.

Pray for us as a team as we once again all join together. Pray for unity, and shared accountability with each other about how we are finding the change back into work. Pray that we would source our strength and guidance from our heavenly father.  
Pray for all the young people who were looking forward to the summer residentials  that we had to cancel. Pray that God would journey with them, and that he would highlight things on the horizon that they can begin to get excited about.

Pray for Janet and the leadership team attempting to provide as safe as possible transition into using our church buildings. Pray for us all, that we would look forward to being back in the fathers house, but that we would also remember that the church is the people and throughout this time we have been able to meet with God without a building.

Contacts

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Website: [www.beaconbenefice.org.uk](http://www.beaconbenefice.org.uk/)

*The Benefice Office is* c*urrently closed .*

Information for next week’s Beacon Light Online to [ajpleach@gmail.com](mailto:ajpleach@gmail.com) by **Tuesday 5pm at the latest,** please.